

From the Pastor—December 20, 2020

Christmas Greetings and Message Please know of my profound prayers for you at Christmas, for each of you and your families. I pray also for your extended family members. I also announce to you with great joy what the shepherds heard on that first Christmas night: Christ is born for us today!!! May this basic truth sustain us in all that we do, giving us consolation in times of hardship and greater cheer in times of well-being. A number of you will be attending Christmas Mass at your parish of origin or where family members now live. A number of you are sheltering in place and participating in Christmas Mass on our parish Facebook page or via other television options. The entire Christmas season kicks off with Christmas, and then the Sunday of the Holy Family, then the January 1st Solemnity of Mary, and finally the Epiphany on January 2-3. We meet ourselves coming and going, as the saying goes, with all of these beautiful Christmas liturgies! I hope and pray that you desire a clean heart for Christmas and plan to make a good Confession; see extra Confession times in this bulletin. If, because of Covid, attending a Confession seems difficult, be repentant of your sins and offer to Jesus your best Act of Contrition...and promise Jesus to make a good Confession at your next best opportunity to do so. I could hear your Confession by appointment, if you don't want to be among a group of people waiting in line. *** My prayers for you are especially at all the Masses, and in praying the Liturgy of the Hours during these days. This liturgy is prayed five times per day, so be ready to receive the best fruits of my prayers. *** Merry Christmas!!!

No public Christmas CCD program The CCD staff and I made the decision not to have a public CCD Christmas program this year, due to the Covid restrictions. The alternative, I think, is going to be a happy replacement. The senior (12th grade) Godteens and their godparent couple filmed the lower and middle primary grades after helping these students produce a Christmas-themed message. These recordings are being made available to parents and grandparents of the students. I hope this effort helps to edify our students and families to make this year's Christmas celebration more joyful and profound.

When A Baby Dies Christmas time sometimes evokes memories of losing a child. Our Diocese of Lincoln has a dedicated staff to assist if you have had such a loss, either recently or long ago, either of a child in utero or a young already-born child. Referred to as Healing Hearts, this diocesan ministry can be accessed by calling the Family Life Office at 402-473-0620. The web site address is <https://www.lincolndiocese.org/bereavement-healing/when-a-baby-dies>. One loving way to remember your child is on the feast of the Holy Innocents, during Christmas week. A Mass in Lincoln that week, which you do not have to attend but are welcome to, includes your child's name. If you didn't name him or her, their name is Baby (your last name). Please know of the prayers of the people of God for these painful losses.

Christmas Movies While a case can be made for comedy movies that many people like to watch at Christmas, I hope we can do better than the easy guffaws of Chevy Chase and National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation. (Don't send me to the Christmas "bah-humbug" corner if that is your favorite Christmas movie!) How about watching with your family the classic Jimmy Stewart movie, It's a Wonderful Life. Or, recent movies like The Star or Mary of Nazareth are also good. You may be shocked that I have never seen the classic Miracle on

34th Street; I need to take care of that omission. While not a movie, A Charlie Brown Christmas is a must-see as well. Just my two-cents worth for you on Christmas viewing.

5 Masses I decided to schedule five Masses for Christmas. The idea is that we want to limit large congregations; having more Masses will help to spread people out. Please see the rest of this bulletin for the exact schedule.

Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, today, and forever. Stay well, stay strong, in Christ!

THE PROCLAMATION OF THE BIRTH OF CHRIST

The Roman Martyrology for Christmas day contains a formal announcement of the birth of Christ in the style of a proclamation. It begins with creation and relates the birth of the Lord to the major events and personages of sacred and secular history. The particular events contained in the proclamation help to situate the birth of Jesus in the context of salvation history.

Today, the twenty-fifth day of December, unknown ages from the time when God created the heavens and the earth and then formed man and woman in his own image.

Several thousand years after the flood, when God made the rainbow shine forth as a sign of the covenant.

Twenty-one centuries from the time of Abraham and Sarah; thirteen centuries after Moses led the people of Israel out of Egypt.

Eleven hundred years from the time of Ruth and the Judges; one thousand years from the anointing of David as king; in the sixty-fifth week according to the prophecy of Daniel.

In the one hundred and ninety-fourth Olympiad; the seven hundred and fifty-second year from the foundation of the city of Rome.

The forty-second year of the reign of Octavian Augustus; the whole world being at peace,

Jesus Christ, eternal God and Son of the eternal Father, desiring to sanctify the world by his most merciful coming, being conceived by the Holy Spirit, and nine months having passed since his conception, was born in Bethlehem of Judea of the Virgin Mary.

Today is the nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the flesh.

God Bless You!!!

Father Grell